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The first talk of the year - Thursday 7th January at 2.30

Staff Nurse Emily Connell

John Griffiths-Colby

Emily was a remarkable woman; having enrolled in the Territorial Force Nursing Service in 1908, she was appointed as Staff Nurse at 3rd Western General Hospital in Cardiff when war broke out in 1914. As well as serving there throughout the First World War, she kept an autograph book in which her patients drew and wrote messages...intriguing!

Do you use our Website?

<https://www.tunbridgewellsu3a.org/>

While our website provides information about twu3a for prospective members, it is also an excellent place for existing members to find information about groups, read Newsletters issued in the last 12 months, check on talks and walks and, when we can restart them, find out about outings and all our other activities.

We are in the process of updating the website and it is very much a work in progress. However, we hope that you will find what you are looking for there and that you will **let us know if you do not!**

Check it out. A quick look will show you that the website needs photographs, both as headers (landscape view) and to illustrate the group pages.

HAVE YOU GOT PHOTOS WHICH COULD BRIGHTEN THE WEBSITE?

If you have photos of Tunbridge Wells which we could use as headers, or pictures of group activities for the group pages, or any other suggestions, please email them to Eryll. Please bear in mind that they will appear without credits and that, if they include photos of people, for GDPR regulations, you must have their permission to use the photo on the website as it is in the public domain.

If you have not got any photos to hand why not go out on a sunny day (let's hope there will be some) and snap the town? If you do this before 15th January, you could kill two birds with one stone and send the best to Bridget for entry in the Photograph Competition!

[Eryll Fabian](mailto:Eryll) (01892 513805)



Anyone for Friday Coffee?

If you use Zoom and would like to meet new people and make new friends, why not join the **Zoom Coffee Club**? Meetings will be held on 15th January, 19th February and 19th March at 10.30 am. For further details or to join the club, please contact [Eryll](#)

Everyone is welcome!

Questionnaire Prize Draw

Many thanks to those of you who completed our online questionnaire by 21st December.

The winners of the Prize Draw were as follows:

Four £10 M&S Vouchers: Jonathan Farley, Mary Forrester, Pamela Mansfield, Bobbie Hall

Ten 2021 u3a Diaries: Beryl Summons, Geraldine Wenham, Gloria Moody, Barbara May, Mary Ollett, Pauline Otto, Celestine Ryan, Alan Bernstein, Hilary Kearney, Stella Westrup.

The questionnaire is going to be useful for planning and recruiting and the results will be published once the Committee has had time to consider them. We have received a 30% reply rate so far, which is normal for a questionnaire of this sort, but it would be good to receive more. If you have not already done so but would like to, don't delay, but please [click here](#), the closing date is 10th January.

Eryll Fabian

TW u3a FutureLearn Trial

This trial of 2 online courses, provided by FutureLearn, began in late November.

The subjects were **The Living Picture Craze: An introduction to Victorian Film** (3 weeks) and **The Tudors** (6 weeks). There were 3 participants for each of the 2 subjects, with one member acting as the virtual group leader. Each group met on Zoom towards the end of each week, to discuss matters of common interest. Some participants did their week's reading all in one morning, whilst others preferred to use several shorter periods during the week.

Everyone agreed that the courses had been interesting to study. In each course, there were references to modern films about the historical period. We agreed that we would preferred if these had been mentioned at the end, instead of during each course. We are very grateful to the members who helped us by participating in this trial.

FutureLearn offer more than 600 free short courses, lasting between 2 and 6 weeks. Details of the other courses currently available can be found at <https://www.futurelearn.com/>

WINTER ZOOM TALKS

Bob Slater, our talks organiser has put together a great programme to keep us entertained until April. More details will be released nearer the time, but these are the dates to put in your diary. If you're not already on the mailing list, then email suebrimlow@btinternet.com to be added to the group.

21 st January	Gilly Halcrow	The Shetland Bus – WWII
4 th February	James Taylor	Brilliant British Humour in the forgotten art of the Picture Postcard
18 th February	Diana Small	Roman Londinium to London in Modern Times
4 th March	Delia Taylor	The Pre-Raphaelites – Their Lives, Lovers & Legacy
18 th March	Antonia Brown-Griffin	The life changing work of a guide dog - from hooligan to Hero
1 st April	Melanie Gibson-Barton	Bruges – More than just chocolate

WINTER PHOTO COMPETITION

Come on everyone! While you're out exercising why not take a few photos. Or even if you're indoors, winter still happens. You have time...

The theme is **WINTER**: Can you picture a beautiful scene or an iconic object that epitomises winter?

Photographs will be exhibited on the TWu3a website and the winners will be in February's newsletter and on our Facebook page.

PRIZES: The best 3 photos will receive a bottle of wine (as recommended by the wine appreciation group)

Please send your photos to the editor by post (1 Onslow House, Castle Rd, TW, TN4 8BY) or [email](#). The deadline is **January 15th**.

The rules are simple - only one photo each and no people.

Also please sign & include this disclaimer in your email or envelope.

By submitting my photograph to this competition, I confirm that:

- I am the sole author (and owner) of this photograph.
- The photograph is not of, and does not include, any people.
- I give permission for TWu3a to display this photo in the TWu3a Newsletter, website and Facebook page and I understand that it may not always be possible to credit me as the photographer.



Please be as inventive as you like. **GOOD LUCK**

GROUPS COORDINATOR

TW u3a groups.....for the members, by the members

1st meeting (2021) of the Gardening and Garden Visits Group

Zoom Drop-in Wednesday 20th January 5pm

For an invitation or
if you are interested in joining or
have topic ideas for this new, evolving group
please let me know.

lhaselltwu3a@gmail.com



Theatre Group planning meeting to discuss 2021 bookings

Zoom Drop-in Wednesday 20th January 6pm

We have a list of theatre venues, dates (May onwards) and prices! For an invitation or if you are interested in joining or discussing which productions you might be keen to see please let me know.

lhaselltwu3a@gmail.com

Judy Horwood has taken over as contact for the **NEW ZOOMERS**.

Click [here](#) for her contact details

We are always keen to start new groups

Maybe you have an idea and are interested in starting a group or being a member of one of the following!

Serendipity facts and anecdotes about chosen 'ambiguous' words, sent out via email

Jigsaw merry go round

Armchair travellers

Cryptic crosswords

GROUP NEWS

The next Zoom meeting of the **Art Appreciation Group** will be on 20th January opening at 2 p.m. for a 2.15 p.m. start. (earlier than usual). The subject will be "Tiffany Glass". You probably associate the name with "Breakfast at Tiffany's" or have heard of the Tiffany diamond, but do



you know about the glasswork? I hope to introduce you to the work of Louis C Tiffany who for 40 years was the leader and outstanding fashionable artist of the American Art Nouveau period. If you are not on the group mailing list and would like to join please contact me.

[Elaine Royal](#)

"Vase art nouveau Tiffany (British Museum)"
[Jean-Pierre Dalbéra from Paris, France, CC BY 2.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons

Art Appreciation Talk: Art That Has Caused A Sensation. 25 November 2020

Elaine Royal opened this highly informative and entertaining illustrated talk with Maggi Hambling's *Sculpture for Mary Wollstonecraft*. Unveiled just a few weeks earlier, the sculpture immediately attracted criticism mainly for its depiction of nudity and objectification of the female form.

Elaine introduced examples of renaissance paintings which had sparked controversy when they were first displayed, often attracting criticism from the person who had commissioned the work: Michelangelo's fresco *The Last Judgement* (1536–1541) in the Sistine Chapel had to be partially overpainted to obscure many of its male nudes and pagan mythological figures; Caravaggio's *Death of the Virgin* (1606) was said to make the figure of Mary look too ordinary and the disciples to look like labourers; and Caravaggio's *Madonna of The Rosary* (1607) was criticised for showing several of the kneeling faithful to have dirt on the soles of their feet.

She then discussed *The Raft of the Medusa* (1818-1819) by Théodore Géricault. This over life-size painting was itself based on a major scandal linked to the incompetence of an inexperienced French naval captain who happened to be an aristocratic friend of Louis XVIII. Paintings by Picasso, Manet and John Singer Sargent were covered as well as *Fountain* (1917), a sculpture by **Marcel Duchamp** (see image) which is now regarded as a major landmark in avant-garde art.

Liz Strang discussed the so-called Tate Bricks (1972). At the time, the gallery's trustees were widely ridiculed for being conned into buying 120 firebricks for £6,000. Liz explained that *Equivalent VIII* (1966) was in fact one of eight arrangements that had originally formed a much larger, more significant installation by the American minimalist artist Carl Andre.

This highly engaging talk reminded us that contemporary responses to works of art can so often provide a more nuanced and accurate social commentary than we might read in a history textbook. Even in a multimedia world, paintings can still cause discomfort and trigger political examination. For me, that's something to celebrate and cherish.

Stephen Davis



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LAST MONTH'S TALKS

Georgian dress restoration **Anna Spender**



60 years ago, a Georgian lady's Court gown and gentleman's suit were loaned to the TW museum. The dress has since been confirmed by the V&A as being made of English silk taffeta brocade from Spitalfields, London. It follows the fashion trend of 1780 which would have had a cane and linen hooped petticoat with padding around the waist and hips to accentuate these parts. The back had pleats falling from the shoulders (unflatteringly called a sackback) which allowed the fabric to be displayed at its best. In the 1990s it was exhibited at The Day at the Wells on the Pantiles and in 2008 the clothes were finally donated to the museum. Over the years various restorations have been made and although it would have been a very expensive dress originally its last use was probably as a fancy dress costume. (£2,200 - £13,400 in today's money and I would think our court gown would be at the upper end of that range" AS)

Silver thread needs to be reattached, solvent cleaning to remove the staining, creases steamed out and the stomacher is in such a sad state of repair that a new one may need to be made. It will

take pride of place in the Camden Room of the new museum housed in the Amelia Scott building.

Anna has sent the link to the Curator Podcasts she mentioned: <https://theamelia.co.uk/get-involved/learning-resources/curator-podcasts/>. Episodes 8 and 9 are about the history of the corset, by Julie Hawsworth.

Pete Allen History of Pantomime

According to Pete, who is a director and an actor, Pantomime is the hardest of all theatre but the most fun. It is now a mainly British phenomenon. However, it was the most popular entertainment of the Roman Empire for 700 years and disappeared in the 6th century AD. The Italian Commedia dell'arte and British Mystery plays both influenced the more modern pantomime with their recognisable characters and visual jokes.

The first spoken word pantomime was The Loves of Mars and Venus, put on by David Garrick at the Theatre Royale, Drury Lane in 1717. Originally a short play performed before the main event, it later became popular in its own right with big name actors taking leading roles. Devices such as catchphrases and speaking directly to the audience became integral and their popularity was such that bigger theatres needed to be built.

Pantomime was constantly evolving. The first principal boy to be played by a female was in 1819 and the tradition of men in drag as 'dames' or 'ugly sisters' started in 1860. The Roman/Greek storylines were dropped and fairy tales were used instead. Jokes and songs are often topical and as such are updated frequently to keep the humour current and therefore funny.

For 250 years they were the biggest stage productions in London and then in the 1920s they fell out of fashion. Local communities took up the mantle and pantomime became a seasonal part of life in cities and towns across the country. Until this year of Covid-19... **Boo and hiss!!**



Colin's Quick Quiz

POT LUCK!

1. Before 2020, three Formula 1 racing drivers were awarded knighthoods, which countries do they come from?
2. Name any of the nuns' characters portrayed in the film *The Black Narcissus*?
3. During the 12 days of Christmas my true love sent to me...how many gifts?
4. Which children's television favourite is the only one to have had a Christmas UK No.1 hit?
A. Bob the Builder B. Peppa Pig in a Blanket C. The Wombles
5. Britain's only free ranging herd of reindeer is usually to be found, where?
A. Glenmore, Cairngorms B. Whipsnade Zoo C. Windsor Great Park
6. A Christmas ingredient is central to the plot of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 1892 short story *The Blue Carbuncle*. What was it?
A. Goose B. Plum Pudding C. Mince Pie
7. Mendelssohn wrote *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* not as a carol but for what original purpose?
A. 400th anniversary of the printing press B. King of Prussia's birthday
C. Birmingham music festival 1846
8. What was Mary riding when she arrived in Bethlehem?
9. Which Dr. Who actor played the children's story character *Worzel Gummidge* on television?
10. What was the name of John the Baptist's Mother, a cousin of Mary?
A. Rachel B. Elizabeth C. Judith

LAST MONTH'S WALK WITH CAROLINE PIPER

British Masters at the National Gallery

France had the Louvre and Italy the Uffizi and in the 19th century it was felt that Britain was behind the times culturally, as we had no National art space. So a National Gallery was planned and opened in 1838 at its present site on Trafalgar Square. This site was chosen as it was in the centre of London between the rich West end and the poorer East end; it was to be 'a civilizing space where normal people could be elevated'. It was to be an educational establishment and free of charge. It has only been closed once (until the present day!) in WWII when the paintings were moved to the safety of a Welsh coalmine.

One of the major exhibits of English art is the Hogarth series of 6 paintings called Marriage-A-La-Mode. It tells the tawdry tale of an arranged marriage where all the characters are tarnished by greed, vanity or lust. Here you can see painting number 3 'The Inspection'. The husband is at the Doctor's with a very young prostitute and her 'mother', to be inspected for syphilis. He is holding a pot of mercury pills and everyone in the painting has signs of also having the disease: black spots and rashes on the skin and in particular the collapsed nose of the Doctor.



The whole series disgusted and fascinated the public, (and still do today) but were not as popular as some of his other work.

Picture courtesy of Caroline via the National Gallery

Quiz answers

1. England (Sir Stirling Moss). Scotland (Sir Jackie Stewart). Australia (Sir Jack Brabham)
2. Sisters Ruth, Blanche, Briony, Philippa & Clodagh
3. 364
4. Bob the Builder
5. Glenmore, Cairngorms
6. Goose
7. 400th anniversary of the printing press
8. The Bible doesn't say
9. John Pertwee
10. Elizabeth

USEFUL INFORMATION

FORTHCOMING EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

Please Note - Owing to the pandemic, all face-to-face events have been cancelled for the time being. They will resume as soon they can be arranged safely within government guidelines.

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman	Eryll Fabian	01892 513805
Vice-Chairman	Adrian Twiner	01892 459352
Secretary	Fiona Findlay	07872 169146
Treasurer	David Brimlow	01892 860598
Group Coordinator	Lindsay Hasell	01892 673180
Membership Secretary	Ruth Johnson	01892 523097
Outings Coordinator	Joan Young	01892 546687
Seminars/Study Days	Jean Brushfield	01892 520630
Newsletter	Bridget Sands	01892 546161
Short Breaks & Holidays	Sandra McDonald	01892 752196

A Message from the Editor

Any publication is only as good as its contributors and I do hope you will continue to support the Newsletter as it is such an easy and effective way to communicate with you all. If you have a great idea for an article or there is anything interesting you would like to see in the newsletter in the future please let me know.

If anyone objects to their photo being reproduced in this Newsletter, please contact me as soon as possible.

All contributions to the **February** Newsletter should be e-mailed to **Bridget** by 31st January at the latest (**earlier submissions are always welcome!**) or phone 01892 546161.



National Office

Keep up to date with National Office news on the website:

www.u3a.org.uk or write to:

The Third Age Trust, Room 104, Lenta Business Centre,
156 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8EN